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## MISAPPLIED TALENT.

THE land which has given us the electric light, the phonograph, tramways, Pullman trains, tinned fruit, Mark Twain, syndicates, dress paper-shapes, petroleum, patent rockers, washing-machines, ginsling, and other actual or doubtful boons, has also sent us many curious specimens of misapplied ingenuity. Perhaps in a cargo of American 'notions' of the present day one might not find wooden nutmegs, ligneous hams, and eyeless needles; but these were once actual articles of commerce. The writer has seen, in the days before 'brands' attained a commercial value which compelled honest dealing, barrels of American butter which contained only a layer at top and bottom of the yellow substance, while the interior was filled up with coarse salt carefully adjusted to the usual weight of a barrel of butter. It is consolatory to know, however, that American swindlers do not manufacture for export so exclusively as they used to do, and that they have devoted themselves to cultivating the domestic markets.

In the State of New Jersey a public inquiry was recently held into alleged adulterations of food, and the Report presented by the Committee is remarkable. They had caused six hundred and twenty-three separate articles of food offered for sale to be analysed, and of these they found only three hundred and twenty to be pure. Among the pure commodities were those peculiarly American products 'canned goods,' and only one specimen of these was found to be other than it professed to be. But when the 'canned goods' were deducted from the list, the result was even less favourable to transatlantic honesty, for of the remaining articles only 46·83 per cent. were found to be pure, while 53·17 per cent. were adulterated.

Some of the disclosures were very curious. Thus, it seems that the active legislation of some years ago has prevented oleomargarine from being sold as butter, and oleomargarine has come to be a regular and presumably wholesome article

of domestic consumption under its own proper name. The analysts found that which professed to be butter, really butter; but when they came to examine what was offered as oleomargarine, they found a great deal of it was not good oleomargarine, but only bad butter. This is a sufficiently curious turning of the tables.

Lard, again, has become a very indefinite article. What used to be 'Leaf Lard' is declared to be now almost non-existent. What is now offered as 'Western Lard,' say the reporters, is composed of the fat of all portions of the hog mixed indiscriminately; while 'Refined Lard' they found to be a compound of beef-fat, cotton-seed oil, and a small proportion only of hog-fat.

Coffee is largely used in America, but of twenty-four samples analysed, only eight passed the inspection. The others were found to be more or less mixed with roasted and ground peas, beans, rye, wheat, and chicory. One sample of reputed 'Essence of Coffee' contained no trace of coffee whatever, being a compound of burnt treacle and roasted ground corn.

The perfection of fraud, however, was revealed in the various samples of so-called 'Ground Spices' examined. The greatest ingenuity is exercised in the manufacture of pepper, ground ginger, mustard, ground cinnamon, ground cloves, and allspice. The way to make 'Pure Pepper' in America is to mix thoroughly buckwheat hulls and cocoa-nut shells well charred, and then to add a little cayenne for flavouring. To make 'Pure Ginger' you only need Indian corn-meal, turmeric, and a pinch of cayenne. For 'Mustard' all you want is corn-meal, a little real ginger, turmeric, and cayenne. Any kind of spice known to Ceylon or the Eastern Archipelago can be produced in New Jersey on the shortest notice from ground cocoa-nut shells, walnut shells, corn-meal, buckwheat hulls, mustard chaff, ground charcoal, cayenne, turmeric, charred grains of any kind, and burnt bread. Truly, there is no limit to American inventiveness and to human gullibility.

It is not, however, to such more or less manufactured articles of food that the spirit of fraud confines itself, for even in the market for fresh fruit it finds scope. Thus it is alleged by a Chicago paper that all the lemons grown in Florida are artificially and fraudulently coloured for market. 'All' is rather a large word; but let us assume 'some,' and then examine how it is done.

When lemons are picked prematurely—overgreen—they never ripen, and therefore will not turn yellow. But lemon-growers in Florida in haste to catch the market before the European crops begin to arrive, cannot afford to wait for the yellowing of the sun. They pick their lemons as green as grass, and then pile them in a sulphur-chamber to be properly and expeditiously coloured.

A rich golden yellow is the result of the sulphur bath; but that is not so bad if the juice is really inside, for we buy lemons for their flavouring essence, not for their yellow skins. Unfortunately, however, as the fruit is pulled when quite green, the pulp is almost dry.

In much the same way are the orange-growers moved to assist, or to usurp, the operations of Nature. 'Blood-oranges' are supposed to be superior in flavour to the ordinary orange, and at any rate they command an extra price in certain markets—principally, perhaps, because the supply is limited. How to get the benefit of the extra price without increasing the actual supply is the problem which some Florida orange-growers addressed themselves to solve. And this is how they solve it: They take a syringe with a very delicate point, which they gently force through the rind, and by this means inject a small quantity of aniline dye. The dye quickly permeates the whole pulp of the orange and colours it up to the standard of a first-class 'Blood-orange.' The cost is trifling, and the extra return handsome. The effect upon the consumer? Ah! that is a detail which troubles neither the grower nor the dealer, however much it may trouble the patient himself. Aniline dye *may* not be hurtful, but it certainly cannot be wholesome as an article of diet.

It is but right to say that this process for manufacturing 'Blood-oranges' is not an American invention. It was the discovery of an Italian, who practised it long and successfully in his own country, until he was found out. He suffered for his inventive genius in a State prison for a long term, and when he was released, carried his invention and enterprise to the Land of the Setting Sun, where 'smartness' and the almighty dollar are still objects of worship. It is said that 'Blood-oranges' manipulated by this Italian genius will fetch even a higher price from inexperienced purchasers than the genuine article.

Perhaps it was this Italian who served up a toothsome banquet in which some of the most notable dishes were a spider fricassee, a purée of mealworms, a salmi of beetles, and deviled spiders.

But although the Old World may have been the monitor of Uncle Sam in the case of the oranges, he is generally well able to set his European relatives an example in 'smartness' and fraudulent ingenuity.

Take, for instance, the latest system of horse-stealing in Texas. Two men work in concert; they watch the columns of the newspapers for advertisements of strayed horses; and as soon as they read that a ranchman has picked up a strange animal for which he wants the owner, they begin work. One of the pair calls at the ranche, examines the horse, and declares that it isn't his. But he takes note of all its points, and on rejoining his companion, 'posts' the latter thoroughly. Then No. 2 goes to the ranche and describes his lost animal so thoroughly and minutely that there can be no deception. The description tallies exactly with the strayed horse on the ranche, which is therefore handed over to the stranger without further proof. But the stranger is a long way from home, and talks about the distance and the trouble of leading a spare horse, and so on, until he winds up with an offer to sell the wanderer to the ranchman at something considerably under its value. The ranchman jumps at the bargain; the stranger goes away with the money in his pocket; and a few days later, the real owner of the horse turns up to claim and remove his property.

These are but a few examples of the manner in which genius is prostituted by civilised men who presumably call themselves Christians. It is doubtful, however, if even an American swindler can equal in cleverness the Asiatic. The smile, which is childlike and bland, of the accomplished Chinaman, often masks a profundity of cunning and a dexterity in fraud that the Caucasian cannot rival.

Even the mild Hindu has a faculty for fraud that is not always suspected. In the bazaars of Calcutta and Bombay the vilest poison is sold to the English sailors in bottles branded and capsuled as Martell's or Hennessy's Brandy, Duvillie's Whisky, and the like. Jack pays the full price of the genuine article, but is supplied with a villainous compound of native concoction. The dealer knows the value of brands. He lays in a stock of the genuine bottles, and never disturbs labels or capsules. By the skilful application of the blowpipe, he drills a small hole in the bottom of the bottle, draws off all the genuine liquid, replaces it with his poisonous stuff, closes up the hole so that no trace remains, and palms off the bottle on unsuspecting Jack as real 'Martell' or 'fine old Irish.' The abstracted liquor will, of course, always sell on its own merits elsewhere.

Another ingenious device of the mild Hindu is to drill a hole in the thickness of a rupee, and then, with infinite labour and skill, to scrape out the silver from the *inside*, leaving only a sort of shell, without damaging the impression or the rim. Lead is then poured gently in, mixed with some alloy which gives the requisite ring, and the hole is carefully closed. Only a very keen and experienced eye can detect the imposture. The silver which is thus abstracted will be worth less than a shilling, and the manipulator has still his rupee to spend. But the operation may occupy him the greater portion of a week, during which time he might have earned two rupees by honest work!

In fact, it may be said that if all the ingenuity and talent which are applied to swindles were directed to legitimate ends, the rewards would be

both greater and more continuous than in the precarious and hazardous harvests of fraud. Leaving out of sight the moral question, it is indisputably the fact that honest labour *pays* best.

MY SHIPMATE LOUISE.

THE ROMANCE OF A WRECK.

CHAPTER XXIX.—I QUESTION WETHERLY.

It had now become so much one thing on top of another with us, and everything happening in a moment, so to speak, too: first our being left on the wreck all in a breath as it were: then our being picked up by this barque without the dimmest prospect, as my instincts advised me, of our falling in with the *Countess Ida* this side of Bombay: then our destitute condition aboard a craft whose skipper's sanity I was now honestly beginning to distrust, and whose people, if he did not lie, were for the most part a gang of scoundrels: then this sudden narrow shave of being boarded by above a score of miscreants whose undoubted hope was to seize the *Lady Blanche* and to use her in the room of their own extinguished brig: I say it was so much one thing on top of another—a catalogue of adventures scarcely conceivable in these safe-going days of the ocean mailboat, though real enough and in one way or another frequent enough in my time, I mean in the time of this narrative—that I protest something of the dismay which possessed Miss Temple visited me, though I struggled hard in the direction of a composed face, as we talked over the incident of the morning, and took a view of the singular staring figure who had charge of the barque, and directed our eyes at the crew, all hands of whom hung about forward, briskly yarning, as I might suppose, about the Spanish longboat's attempt (and with God knows what sympathy, I would think, as I peered at the groups), or as we sent our eager gaze into the blue and brilliant ocean distance in search of any little leaning flake of white that might flatter us with promise of escape from our disagreeable situation.

'I have fully and immovably formed my opinion on two points,' said Miss Temple to me as we continued to pace the deck together for some half-hour after the boat had disappeared astern: 'one is, that Captain Braine is mad; and the other that he is firmly bent on making you serve him as his mate.'

'I own that I now believe he is madder than I first suspected,' I answered. 'His manner and language to you just now were extraordinary. But as to his employing me as mate—I think this: if the man is crazy, he may easily go wrong in his navigation; if we sight nothing that will carry us home, we must obviously stick to the barque, and her safety, therefore, is ours; consequently, it is desirable I think that I should know what her skipper is doing with her from day to day; and this I can contrive by consenting to oblige him with taking sights.'

'I see what you mean,' she exclaimed thoughtfully. 'I had not taken that view; but it is a cruel one to entertain; it implies our remaining on board until—until—— Oh Mr Dugdale, this sort of imprisonment for the next two or three months is not to be borne.'

'Anyway,' said I, 'you now understand that our very safety demands we should know where that fellow is carrying his ship. If, then, he should request me to shoot the sun, as we call it, you will not be vexed by my compliance?'

'Who am I, Mr Dugdale, that you should trouble yourself about my opinion?'

'You can make yourself felt,' said I, smiling; 'I should consider your eyes matchless in their power to subdue. There is a little passage in Shakespeare that very exquisitely fits my theory of you.'

'I would rather not hear it,' she answered, with a slight curl of her lip and a faint tinge of rose in her cheeks. 'You once applied to me a very unflattering Shakespearean metaphor.'

'What was it?'

'You compared my complexion to the white death that one of Shakespeare's girls talks about.'

'I remember. I am astonished that your aunt should have repeated to you what she overheard by stealth.'

'I do not understand,' she exclaimed, firing up.

'She was behind me when I made that quotation, and I was unconscious of her presence. She should have respected my ignorance. I meant no wrong,' I went on, pretending to get into a passion. 'Your complexion is pale, and I sought to illustrate it to my little friend Saunders by an expression of striking nobility and beautiful dignity. If ever I have the fortune to find myself in your aunt's company, I shall give her my mind on this business. How am I to know but that her repeating what she had heard me tell fall excited in you the disgust I found in your treatment of me?'

She cooled down as I grew hot.

'The extravagance of your language shocks me,' she exclaimed, but with very little temper in her voice. 'Disgust? You have no right to use that word. You were always very courteous to me on board the *Countess Ida*.'

'Am I less so here?' said I, still preserving an air of indignation.

'Do not let us quarrel,' she said gently, with such a look of sweetness in her eyes as I should have thought their dark and glowing depths incapable of.

'If we quarrel, it will not be my fault,' said I, disguising myself with my voice, whilst I looked seawards that my face might not betray me.

At that moment the captain called out my name: 'Can I have a word with you, sir?' he cried along the short length of poop, standing as he was at the wheel, whilst we were conversing at the fore-end of the raised deck.

'With pleasure,' I answered.

'I shall go into the cabin,' said Miss Temple; 'it is too hot here. You will come and tell me what he wants.'

I waited until she had descended the ladder, and then strolled over to the captain, determined

to let him know by my careless air that whatever I did for him he must regard as an obligation, or as an expression of my gratitude; but that I was not to be commanded. I believed I could witness an expression of embarrassment in his fixed regard that I had not before noticed in him. He eyed me as though lost in thought, and I waited.

'Would you object,' said he, 'to ascertain our latitude at noon to-day?'

'Not in the least.'

He seemed to grow a little brighter. 'And I should feel obliged,' he continued, 'if you'd work out the longitude.'

'With pleasure,' I said. I looked at my watch. 'Where shall I find a sextant?' I demanded, not choosing he should know I was aware that there was one in Mr Chicken's locker.

'I have a couple,' he exclaimed; 'I will lend you one;' and down he went for it with a fluttered demeanour of eagerness.

I lingered till I supposed he had entered his cabin, then put my head into the skylight and called softly to Miss Temple, who was seated almost directly beneath for the air there: 'He wishes me to take an observation with him.'

'What is that?' she answered, also speaking softly and turning up her face.

'I am to shoot the sun—you know, Miss Temple.'

'Oh, pray, contrive to make some error—commit some blunder to make him suppose'—She checked herself, and I heard the captain say that it was very hot as he came to the companion steps.

In a few moments he arrived on deck, hugging a brace of sextant cases to his heart. He told me to choose; I took the one nearest to me, perceived that the instrument was almost new, and as it was now hard upon the hour of noon, applied it to my eye, the captain standing alongside of me ogling the sun likewise. I could see the men forward, waiting for the skipper to make eight bells, staring their hardest at the now unusual spectacle to them of two sextants at work. For my part, I should have been shocked by the weakness of my memory if I had not known what to do. During the two years I had spent at sea I was thoroughly grounded in navigation—such as it was in those days; and as I stood screwing the sun down to the horizon, the whole practice of the art, so far as my education in it went, came back to me as freshly as though I had been taking sights ever since.

He made eight bells. Mr Lush came aft to relieve the deck, and I went below with Captain Braine to work out the barque's position.

I smiled at Miss Temple as I entered the cuddy; she watched me eagerly, and the movement of her lips seemed to say, 'Don't be long.' In fact, her face had that meaning; and I gave her a reassuring nod ere turning to follow the captain into his berth. The apartment was small and cheerful, plainly stocked with the customary details of a humble skipper's sea-bedroom: a cot, a small table, a cushioned locker, a few mathematical instruments, a little hanging shelf of strictly nautical books, and so on. His chronometer was a good one, handsome for those days, of a quality one would hardly expect to find in a little trading-barque of the pattern of this *Lady Blanche*. There was a bag of charts in a corner,

and a small chart of the world lay half unrolled upon the table, with a bit of the Atlantic Ocean visible exhibiting the skipper's 'pricking' or tracing of his course down to the preceding day.

'Here's ink and paper, sir,' said he; 'sit ye down, and let's see if we can tally.'

I was always a tolerably quick hand at figures, and had soon completed my calculations, feeling as though I was at sea again in sober professional earnest. The captain worked with extraordinary gravity; his singular eyes overhung the paper without a wink, and his yellow countenance, with his blue chops and chin, wore the melancholy of a mute's face, mixed with an indefinable quality of distress, as though his mental efforts were putting him to physical pain. We agreed to a second in our latitude, but differed in our longitude by something over seven miles.

'You'll be in the right, sir—you'll be in the right!' he cried, smiting the table with his fist. 'It is clear you know the ropes, Mr Dugdale. I'll abide by your reckonings.—And now I want ye to do me a further service.'

'What is that, captain?' said I.

'Well, ye may reckon, of course, that I can write,' he answered; 'but I never was topweight with my pen, as Jack says, nor, for the matter of that, was Chicken much of a hand. There was some words which he was always making a foul hawse of. Now, what I want ye to do, Mr Dugdale, is to keep my log for me.'

'All this,' said I carelessly, yet watching him with attention, 'is practically making a chief officer of me.' He did not answer. 'Of course, I don't object,' I continued, stimulated more perhaps by Miss Temple's than by my own views, 'to oblige in any possible manner a gentleman'—

'I am no gentleman,' said he, with a wave of the hand.

'—to whom Miss Temple and myself owe our lives. But I may take it that it is thoroughly understood the young lady and myself are to quit your hospitable little ship at the first opportunity that may offer.'

He regarded me in silence for I should say at least a minute; I was positively beginning to believe that he had fallen dumb. At last he seemed to come to life. He nodded slowly three times and said very deliberately: 'Mr Dugdale, you and me will be having a talk later on.'

'But, good God, captain,' cried I, startled out of my assumed manner of indifference or ease, 'you will at least assure me that you'll make no difficulty of transhipping us when the chance to do so occurs?'

He was again silent, all the while staring at me; and presently, in a deep voice, said, 'Later on, sir;' and with that stood up.

'How much later on?' I inquired.

He tapped his brow with his forefinger and answered: 'It needs reflection, and I must see my way clearly. So far it's all right. I'm much obliged to ye, I'm sure;' and he went to the door and held it open, closing it upon himself after I had stepped out.

At the instant I resolved to tell Miss Temple of what had passed; then swiftly thought no! it will only frighten the poor girl, and she can-



not advise me; I must wait a little; and with a smiling face I seated myself by her side. But secretly, I was a good deal worried. I chatted lightly, told her that there was nothing whatever significant in the captain's request that I should check his calculations by independent observations, and did my utmost, by a variety of cheerful small-talk referring wholly to our situation, to keep her heart up. Nevertheless, secretly, I was much bothered. The man had something on his mind of a dark, mysterious nature, it seemed to me; and I could not question that it formed the motive of his interrogatories as to my seamanship, and of his testing my qualities as a navigator by putting a sextant into my hand. Whatever his secret might prove, was it likely to stand between us and our quitting this barque for something homeward bound? It was most intolerably certain that if Captain Braine chose to keep me aboard, I must remain with him. For how should I be able to get away? Suppose I took it upon myself to signal a vessel when he was below: the hailing, the noise of backing the yards, the clamour of the necessary manœuvring, would hardly fail to bring him on deck; and if he chose to order the men to keep all fast with the boat, there could be no help for it; he was captain, and the seamen would obey him.

These thoughts, however, I kept to myself. The day passed quietly. Again and again Miss Temple and I would search the waters for any sign of a ship; but I took notice that the barrenness of the ocean did not produce the same air of profound misery and dejection which I had witnessed in her yesterday. In fact, she had grown weary of complaining; she was beginning to understand the idleness of it. From time to time, though at long intervals, something fretful would escape her, some reference to the wretched discomfort of being without change of apparel; to the misfortune of having fallen in with the ship, whose fore-castle people, if her captain was to be believed, were for the most part no better than the company of brigands whom we had scraped clear of that morning. But it seemed to me that she was slowly schooling herself to resignation, that she had formed a resolution to look with some spirit into the face of our difficulties, a posture of mind I was not a little thankful to behold in her, for, God knows, my own anxiety was heavy enough, and I did not want to add to it the sympathetic trouble her grief and despair caused me.

All day long the weather continued very glorious. The captain ordered a short awning to be spread over the poop, and Miss Temple and I sat in the shadow of it during the greater part of the afternoon. There was nothing to read; there was no sort of amusement to enable us to kill the time. Nevertheless, the hours drifted fleetly past in talk. Miss Temple was more communicative than she had ever before been; talked freely of her family, of her friends and acquaintances, of her visits abroad, and the like. She told me that she was never weary of riding, that her chief delight in life was to follow the hounds; and indeed she chatted so fluently on one thing and another that she appeared to forget our situation: a note almost of gaiety entered her voice; her dark eyes sparkled, and the cold,

marble-like beauty of her face warmed to the memories which rose in her. I gathered from her conversation that she was the only living child of her mother, and that there was nothing between her and a very tolerable little fortune, as I might infer from her description of the home Lady Temple had kept up in her husband's life, and that she still, though in a diminished degree, supported for the sake of her daughter, though she herself lay paralysed and helpless, looked after in Miss Temple's absence by a maiden sister.

I recollect wondering whilst I listened to her that so fine a woman as she and a fortune to boot had not long ago married. Was she waiting for some man with whom she could fall in love? or was it some large dream of title and estate that hindered her? or was it that she was without a heart? No, thought I; her heart will have had nothing to do with it. Your heartless girls get married as fast as the rest of them; and was she heartless? It was not easy to let one's gaze plumb the glowing liquid depths of her eyes, which seemed to my fancy to be charged with the fires of sensibility and passion, and believe her heartless.

There was something wild in the contrast betwixt the imaginations she raised in me by her talk of her home and her pleasures with her own beauty at hand to richly colour every fancy she inspired—betwixt my imagination, I say, and the realities about us, as I would most poignantly feel whenever I sent a glance at old Lush. He was a mule of a man, and stood doggedly at a distance, never addressed nor offered, indeed, to approach us, though sometimes I would catch him taking me in from head to toe out of the corner of his surly eyes. Possibly, my showing that I had a trick of navigation above his knowledge excited his spleen; or maybe his hatred of the captain led him to dislike me because of the apparent intimacy between the skipper and me. Anyway, I would catch myself looking at him now with a feeling of misgiving for which I could find no reason outside of the mere movement of my instincts.

It was in the second-day watch that evening; Miss Temple was resting in the little cuddy, and I stepped on to the main-deck to smoke a pipe. The topmost canvas of the barque delicately swayed under a cloudless heaven that was darkly, deeply, beautifully blue with the shadow of the coming night. A large star trembled above the ocean verge in the east; but the glow of sunset still lingered in the west over a sea of wonderful smoothness rippling in frosty lines to the breeze that gushed from between the sunset and the north.

The carpenter had charge of the deck; the captain was in his cabin. Whilst I lighted my pipe, I caught sight of the man Joe Wetherly seated on the coaming of the fore-hatch past the little galley. He was puffing at an inch of dusky clay with his arms folded upon his breast, and his countenance composed into an air of sailorly meditation. This seemed an opportunity for me to learn what he had to tell or might be willing to impart about the inner life of the *Lady Blanche*, and I went along the deck in an easy saunter, as though it was my notion to measure the planks for an evening stroll. I

started when abreast of him with a manner of pleased surprise.

'Oh! it is you, Wetherly? My old acquaintance, Smallridge's friend! No sign of the Indian-man, though. I fear we have outrun her by leagues. And always when you are on the lookout for a sail at sea, nothing heaves into sight.'

He rose to my accost, and saluted me with a respectful sea-bow, that is, by scraping his forehead with his knuckle with a little kick back of his left leg.

'That's right enough, sir,' he answered. 'I've been sailing myself in a ship for six weeks in middling busy waters, too, with ne'er a sight of anything—not so much as the tail of a gull.'

'Pray sit,' said I; 'I'll keep you company. This is the right spot for a smoke and a yarn; quiet and cool and out of the road of the poop.'

He grinned, and we seated ourselves side by side. I talked to him first about the *Countess Ida*, explained the circumstance of my being in company with Miss Temple, told him who she was, and spoke of her shipwrecked condition so far as her wardrobe went, and how eager she was to return to England; but the old sailor made very little of her being in want of a change of dress.

'There is no need, sir,' said he, 'for the lady to distress her mind with considerations of a shift o' vestments. I allow she can use a needle for herself; there's needles and thread at her service forrads; and how much linnen do she want? Why, one of the skipper's table-cloths 'ud fit her out, I should say.' He turned his figure-head of a face upon me as he added: 'Tain't the loss of clothes, sir, as should occupy her thoughts, but the feeling that she's been took off that there wreck and is safe.'

I fully agreed with him, with some inward laughter, wondering what Miss Temple would think if she had overheard his speech. One thing led to another; at last I said:

'Wetherly, I am going to ask you a plain question; it is one sailor making inquiry of another, and you'll accept me as a shipmate, I know.'—He nodded.—'Is not your captain wanting?' and I touched my head.

'Well,' he answered after a pause, 'I think so, and I've been a-thinking so pretty nigh ever since I've been along with him.'

'What caused his mate's death?'

'He died in a swoon,' he answered—'fell dead alongside the wheel as he was looking into the compass.'

'Have the sailors noticed anything queer in their captain?'

'They're such a party of ignorant scowbankers,' said he, with a slow look round, to make sure that the coast was clear, 'that I don't believe they're capable of noticing anything if it ain't a pannikin of rum shoved under their noses.'

'I don't mind whispering to you,' said I, 'that the captain hinted to me they were not a very reputable body of men—talked vaguely of mutineers and convicts, with one fellow amongst them,' I went on, bating my voice to a mere whisper, 'who had committed a murder.'

He stared at me a moment, and then tilted his cap over his nose to scratch the back of his head.

'He'll know more about 'em, then, than I do,' he responded; 'they're ignorant enough to do wrong without troubling themselves much to think of the job when it was over. Mutineering I don't doubt some of 'em have practised. As to others of 'em being convicts, why, who's to tell? Likely as not, says I. But when it comes to murder—a middling serious charge, ain't it, sir? Of course I dunno—who might the party be, sir?'

'Oh,' I exclaimed, 'it was a vague sort of talk, as I told you. But if Miss Temple and I are to stick to this ship till we get to the Mauritius, it would comfort her, and me, too, for the matter of that, to learn that her crew are not the band of ruffians we have been led to imagine them.'

'Well, sir,' he exclaimed thoughtfully—'I'm sure you'll forgive me, but I don't rightly recollect your name.'

'Dugdale.'

'Well, Mr Dugdale, as you asks for my opinion, I'll give it ye. Of course, it'll go no furdur, as between man and man.'

'Certainly not. I am myself trusting you up to the hilt, as what I have said must assure you. You may speak in perfect confidence.'

He took a cautious look round: 'There's but one man to be regularly afeared of, and that's Mr Lush. I believe he'd knife the capt'n right off if so be as he could be sure we men wouldn't round upon him. I don't mean to say he han't got cause to hate the capt'n. He's a working man without knowledge of perlitte customs, and I believe the capt'n's said more to him than he ought to have said; more than any gentleman would have dreamt of saying, and all because this here carpenter han't got the art o' eating in a way to please the eye. But this here Mr Lush feels it too much: he's allowed it to eat into his mind; and if so be there should come a difficulty, the capt'n wouldn't find a friend in him, and so I tells ye, sir. I don't want to say more'n's necessary and proper to this here occasion of your questions; but though the crew's a desperate ignorant one, ne'er a man among 'em capable of writing or spelling any more'n the carpenter hisself, there's only *him* to be afeared of, so far as I'm capable of disarnin'; though, of course, if he should tarn to and try and work up their feelings, there's naturally no telling how the sailors 'ud show.'

'They seem a pretty smart set of fellows,' said I, finding but little comfort to be got out of this long-winded delivery; 'the ship is beautifully clean, and everything looks to be going straight aboard of you.'

'Oh, every man can do his bit,' he answered; 'but if I was you, sir, being in charge, as you are, of a beautiful young lady, for the likes of which, this here little barque, with nothen but men aboard, and such shabby food as goes aft, is no proper place—if I was you, I says, says I, I'd get away as soon as ever I could.'

I mentally bestowed a few sea-blessings on the head of this marine Job's comforter, but contrived, nevertheless, to look as though I was much obliged to him for his information and advice; and after we had continued discoursing on a variety of nautical topics for some ten minutes

or quarter of an hour longer, I proceeded aft, and spent the rest of the evening in conversing with Miss Temple in the cabin or in walking the deck with her.

### PUNISHMENT OF NAVAL OFFICERS.

AFTER reading your late article upon the Punishment of Seamen in Her Majesty's Navy, I thought it would not be altogether inappropriate to offer your readers a short account of the manner in which punishment is meted out to the officers of that service for the various offences to which human nature is subject, and especially that part of human nature which 'goes down to the sea in ships.'

And first with regard to junior officers, and by junior I mean what is known in the service as 'subordinate,' not having yet received a 'commission' from Her Majesty. These young officers vary in age from fourteen to nineteen, and mess, together with a few of the very junior commissioned officers, in the gunroom. By far the larger number of subordinate officers are, of course, midshipmen.

Every reader of Marryat's novels must be well acquainted with the many scrapes into which the midshipman of that day was constantly falling, and with the various forms of punishment which seem to have formed the routine of a junior officer's life.

His day was made up very easily; the whole time he had to spare from punishment, for offences already committed, was spent in devising new schemes, in breaking more laws. Apparently, to vary the monotony of this kind of life, he would occasionally 'keep a clear sheet' for a short time, pay strict attention to duty, and be a pattern to his messmates; but these fits never lasted long, the temptation to again break through the routine of the ship or to act in disobedience to the laws of the service, always proving too strong to be resisted.

The usual punishment for all minor offences in the old days was 'mast-heading.' This consisted, as every one knows, in the culprit being 'perched' aloft upon the cross-trees for a certain or uncertain number of hours, the time depending upon the gravity of the offence committed and the temper or mood of the officer ordering the ascent. To receive instructions to remain at the mast-head 'until further orders,' must have been the most galling, the item of uncertainty being added to the other inconveniences; and then, may be, forgetfulness was a well-known failing of the officer of the watch, and the uncertainty was almost reduced to a certainty that the fact of there being a midshipman at the mast-head would be altogether forgotten, and the said midshipman's stay there prolonged even more indefinitely than seemed likely when he at first ascended. One can imagine the anxious glances directed to the deck, the occasional spark of hope when the officer's eagle glance happened to be directed skywards.

The principal factor in mast-heading as a punishment seems to have been the enforced solitude, the separation from congenial companionship and pursuits, which it entailed; yet Captain Marryat recalls some of the hours he

thus spent aloft as among the happiest in his existence, passed in quiet, restful contemplation, and somewhere tells a story about a young frequently-punished messmate of his who, wise by experience, always, when mast-headed, carried up some interesting book with which to pass away the otherwise, to him, tedious hours, and who, carrying out this practice one day, found that his sole companion during his stay aloft was a Prayer-book which had been given him by his mother, and which he had unintentionally secreted in his haste, instead of the more worldly volume he had sought; his consequent reflections, and the study of the contents of his mother's gift, which he now opened for the first time, produced so good a result that he became a reformed lad, and, formerly idle and careless, a good and trustworthy officer.

Mast-heading undoubtedly gave the junior officer ample time for reflection upon the misdeeds of which his punishment was the consequence. To sit 'up aloft' for hours undisturbed, except for an occasional hail from the officer of the watch of 'Mast-head there! do you see anything of the gig?' or, 'Let me know when the Admiral leaves the pier;' or, again, if at sea, of some shouted request to know what you make of 'that barque on the lee bow,' ought undoubtedly in the long run to tend to one's reformation; solitary confinement without the deadening effect of the four walls.

In these days of mastless ships, of stump masts with military tops, mast-heading is almost out of the question; even in those very few ships still left with tall, fully-rigged masts, their cross-trees are seldom used as seats of penance. Mast-heading as a punishment is out of date; no longer does the refractory junior officer calm his feelings by the enforced survey of a boundless sea from a dizzy height above the snow-white deck. 'Snow-white decks' themselves are rapidly becoming scarce in Her Majesty's navy; their places are being occupied by turrets, conning towers, 'turtle-backs,' and unsightly steel structures of every description.

And now to come to what is really the subject of this article, the present-day punishments.

Stoppage of leave ranks first, being in most general use, and is applied in a more or less severe degree for all those offences against discipline which are not of so highly serious a nature as to merit 'reporting to Admiral' or 'Admiralty.' If the gravity of the offence committed demands communication with the Lords Commissioners, removal of the officer's name from the Navy List usually follows. Stoppage of leave is a much more irksome punishment now that so much time is spent in harbour, so many 'shore-going' acquaintances made, than in the times of long ago, when remaining on board was often preferable to a long trip in a bumboat and a solitary ramble on terra-firma. Then, again, before the introduction of steam, voyages were very long, and a midship would often, on arrival of his ship in harbour, find that his one suit of mufti was sadly deteriorated owing to the combined action of cockroaches and damp.

'Breaking leave,' which very seldom occurs, is always very severely punished. Keeping 'watch and watch' and an extra allowance of night-watches are both useful methods of

correcting the young officer, and are chiefly applied when the crime consists of some neglect of duty, late relief of the deck, &c.

A midshipman's wine-bill is limited by the Admiralty Instructions; but the captain has the power of still further limiting, or, if necessary, stopping it altogether for offences in that direction.

Inattention to the teaching of the instructors, backwardness in studies or duty, is met by 'extra school' or 'extra drill,' as the case may be.

In the words of Mr Gilbert, the punishment is made to fit the crime; for instance, the case of the midshipman of a sailing cutter failing to bring his boat alongside in a proper seaman-like manner would possibly entail that officer 'standing off and on' the gangway during an hour, when otherwise he would be enjoying the comforts of his berth and the companionship of his messmates. Not keeping a proper lookout when on watch might meet with an order to keep the remainder of the four hours in one spot, well in sight, instead of being free to roam fore and aft as before. Inattentance at 'reelers,' or failing to 'heave the log' accurately, would possibly carry with it the objection of having to 'report' every quarter of an hour, when on watch, until further orders.

First offences are always dealt with very lightly, and are usually met by a caution or a reprimand.

Disobedience or neglect of 'gunroom' law is often punished by the senior officers of the mess—who are responsible for internal order and discipline—and is usually administered by means of a 'dirk' scabbard. This kind of punishment is, of course, not recognised, but is admittedly of good effect, and materially aids in the right training of those born to command in the future, and upon whom the results of England's future battles—may they be few—will greatly depend.

Infringement of the Articles of War, or Queen's Regulations, and Admiralty Instructions, by a senior officer is followed by a trial by court-martial, the sentence varying from a 'reprimand' to that of 'death;' or the 'prisoner' may, of course, be 'acquitted.' The more usual punishments are 'Dismissal from ship,' 'Loss of more or less seniority,' 'Dismissal from Her Majesty's service;' and the more lenient one of 'a severe reprimand;' but in every case the fact of having been 'court-martialed' carries with it a black mark to the end of the officer's career.

## FORGET-ME-NOT.

### CHAPTER III.

In point of artistic beauty and delicacy of floral arrangement throughout Arlington Street, No. 281 certainly bore away the palm; for Miss Dene, like most country girls, had a positive passion for flowers—a graceful fancy she was fortunately in a position to gratify. Many an envious eye fell upon that cool façade with its wealth of glorious bloom; many a darling of fashion paused as he passed on his listless way, and forgot his betting-book and other mundane speculations, to wonder lazily who might some day be the fortunate man

to call that perfectly-appointed mansion and its beautiful mistress his own. For Vere Dene could have picked and chosen from the best of them, and graced their ancestral homes; but now she was five-and-twenty; so they came at last to think it was hopeless, and that a heart of marble pulsed languidly in that beautiful bosom.

The hall-door stood invitingly open; more, perhaps, in reality to catch the faint summer breeze, for the afternoon was hot, and inside, the place looked cool, dim, and deliciously inviting. On a table there lay a pair of long slim gauntlets, thrown carelessly upon a gold-mounted riding-whip; and coming down the shallow stairs, against a background of feathery fern and pale gleaming statuary, was Miss Dene herself. A stray gleam of sunshine, streaming through a painted window, lighted up her face and dusky hair; a beautiful face, with creamy pallor, overlaid by a roseate flush of health. The dark-brown eyes were somewhat large; a trifle hard, too, a stern critic of beauty might have been justified in saying; the tall graceful figure drawn up perhaps too proudly. Vere Dene was, however, no blushing debutante, but a woman who knew her alphabet of life from alpha to omega; who was fully conscious of her power, and the value of her position well enough to discern between honest admiration and studied flattery, and to gather up the scanty grains of truth without mistaking chaff for golden corn. There was no reflection of wistful memory on the heiress's face as she rode slowly down the street some time later, the cynosure of admiring eyes. There was a rush and glitter of carriages hurrying parkwards, as she rode on her way alone, bowing to one acquaintance or another, and dividing her favours impartially.

'A beautiful face,' murmured a bronzed soldierly-looking man to his companion as they lounged listlessly against the rails of the Row, watching the light tide of fashion sweeping by. 'A perfect face, wanting only soul to make it peerless.—Who is she, Leslie?'

'Who is she?' laughed the other. 'Is it possible you do not know Miss Dene?—But I forgot you had been so long in India. You remember old Vavasour Dene, of course, and his son, the poetical genius, who married some demure little country maiden, unknown to Debrett or Burke, and who was cut off with the traditional shilling accordingly. You can imagine the rest of the story; a life-long feud between father and son, ending, as it usually does, in the parent's dying and cheating condemnation by an act of tardy justice. That handsome girl is old Dene's heiress, a woman with all London at her feet, a quarter of a million in her own right, and never a heart in the whole of her perfect anatomy.'

Wholly unconscious of this storiette, and apparently of the admiration she naturally excited, Miss Dene rode on down the Mile, with many a



shake of her shapely head as one gloved hand after another beckoned her to range alongside barouche or mail Phaeton; till at length a slight crush brought her to a standstill. Almost in front of her was an open stanhope, wherein was seated a delicate fragile-looking lady, exquisitely dressed, and apparently serenely indifferent to the glances and smiles in her direction. By her side sat a child of six or seven, a diminutive counterpart of herself, to her fair golden hair and melting pansy-blue eyes. Vere would fain have pushed her way through the crowd and passed on; but the child had seen her, and uttered her name with a cry of innocent delight; and Vere, like many another who is credited with want of heart, had a tender love for children.

'Really, I owe Violet my grateful thanks,' murmured the owner of the stanhope as Vere ranged alongside. 'Positively, I began to fear that you meant to cut me. I should never have forgiven my brother, if you had. My dear child, I warned him it was useless; I did indeed. And now he says that his heart is broken, and that he shall never believe a woman any more.'

Vere looked down into the Marchioness of Hurlingham's fair demure face with a little smile.

'So Lord Bearhaven has been abusing me?' she said. 'I am disappointed. I did not think he would have carried his woes into the boudoir.'

'My dear Diana, he has done nothing of the kind. Surely a man might be allowed to bewail his hard lot with his only sister.—Violet, my darling child, do be careful how you cross the road.'

This warning, addressed to the diminutive little lady, who had succeeded unseen in opening the carriage door, came too late; for by this time the volatile child had recognised some beloved acquaintance over the way, and indeed was already beyond the reach of warning. Vere watched the somewhat hazardous passage breathlessly, then, satisfied that her small favourite had made the dangerous journey in safety, turned to her companion again.

'I have a genuine regard for Lord Bearhaven,' said she, speaking with an effort, 'too great a regard to take advantage of his friendship under false pretences. I shall never forget the kindness he once did me in the hour of my great trouble. Will you tell him so, please? and say that perhaps for the present it will be well for us not to meet.'

'Now, that is so like both of you,' Lady Hurlingham cried, fanning herself in some little heat. 'Why will you both persist in making so serious a business of life? at anyrate, you might have some consideration for us more frivolous-minded mortals. Vere, if you do not come to my Jewel Ball on Thursday, I—I—well, I will never speak to you again.'

'So I am to be coerced, then. I am morally bound to be present since the Society papers have promised the world a sight of the Vere diamonds; besides which, I simply dare not incur your ladyship's displeasure.'

'I wonder if you have a heart at all,' said the other musingly. 'Sometimes I almost doubt it;

and the times I generally doubt it most are immediately after those moments when I have flattered myself that I really have begun to detect symptoms of that organ. The romantic ones have been libelling again. Would you like to hear the latest story?'

'You stopped me for this, I presume. Positively, you will not know a moment's peace till you have told me. I am all attention.'

'They are saying you have no heart, because it was given away long ago: they say there is a rustic lover somewhere in hobnails and gaiters who won your affections, and is afraid to speak since you became a great lady.'

Vere did not reply or glance for a moment into her friend's sparkling mischievous face. A deeper tinge of colour flushed the creamy whiteness of neck and brow, like the pink hue upon a snowy rose.

'They do me too much honour,' she replied. 'Such a model of constancy in this world of ours would indeed be a pearl amongst women. Pray, do they give a name to this bashful Corydon of mine?'

'Naturally, nothing but the traditional second-cousin, *ma chère*. Really, it is quite a pretty romance—the struggling artistic genius who is too proud to speak, now you are in another sphere. Surely you are not offended?'

In spite of her babyish affectations and infantine innocence, mere mannerisms overlying a tender kindly heart, Helena, Marchioness of Hurlingham, was not entirely without an underlying vein of natural shrewdness. She was clever enough to see now that the innocently-directed shaft of a bow drawn at a venture had penetrated between the joints of Vere's armour, in spite of her reputation for being perhaps the most invulnerable woman in London.

'I am not offended,' Vere answered, recovering her chill composure at length; 'only such frivolity annoys me at times. What a lot of idle scandal poor womankind has to endure!—What is that?'

Gradually above the roll of carriages, the clatter of hoofs, the subdued murmur of voices, and light laughter, a louder, sterner hum arose. Borne down on the breeze came distant sounds of strife, and now and then a shriek in a woman's shrill notes; it seemed to swell as if some panic had stricken the heedless crowd farther down the drive. Every face restless and uneasy with the sudden consciousness of some coming danger, was turned in the direction whence the evidence of trouble arose, as a carriage and pair of horses, coming along at lightning speed, scattered pedestrians and riders right and left, like a flock of helpless sheep, in a wild medley of confusion.

As if by magic, a lane seemed to have opened, and coming along the open space tore a pair of fiery chestnuts, dragging after them in their fear and fright a mail phaeton as if it had been matchwood. With a feeling of relief, the helpless spectators noticed that the vehicle was empty, save for its driver, who, with bare head and face white as death, essayed manfully to steer the maddened animals straight down the roadway, a task rendered doubly dangerous and difficult from the crowded state of the Row, and the inability of certain tyros to keep the path sufficiently clear.

In the midst of the turmoil and confusion there arose another cry, a shout of fear and unheeded expostulation, for, crossing the roadway smilingly, without the semblance of a fear, came a little child, bearing in her hand a bunch of roses; a little girl, with sunny golden curls and laughing blue eyes, standing like a butterfly before a sweeping avalanche. There was another shout, and again the tiny passenger failed to note her danger as nearer and nearer came the horses, till through the now paralysed, helpless crowd burst the figure of a man, who, without a moment's hesitation, sprang forward and caught the child just as the pole of the carriage threatened to strike her to the ground. There was no longer time for an escape, a fact of which the heroic stranger was perfectly aware; and grasping the laughing maiden with one powerful arm, with the other he made a grab for the off-horse's head, and clung to the bridle with the bulldog tenacity of despair. For a moment the animals, checked in their headlong career, swerved to the right; there was a crashing sound of broken panels, and a moment later child, rescuer, horses, and driver lay in an inextricable struggling confusion.

For a second or two there followed a dread intense silence, as each butterfly of fashion contemplated in fascinated horror the struggling mass; then, before the nearest could interfere, it was seen that the stranger had risen to his feet, his garment soiled and stained, and a stream of ruddy crimson slowly trickling down his face. Just for a brief instant he reeled from very faintness, till, dashing the blinding blood from his eyes, he stooped swiftly, and at the imminent risk of his brains, drew the now thoroughly frightened child right from under those terrible hoofs, and taking her in his arms, staggered rather than walked to a seat.

Meanwhile, Lady Hurlingham, beside herself with grief and terror, the lady of fashion merged for the moment into the mother, had descended from her carriage, her face pale and haggard, and hurried with Vere to the seat where the stranger reclined. It was no time for ceremony or class distinction. With a gesture motherly and natural, as if she had been moulded of meaner clay, she snatched little Violet from the arms still mechanically holding her, with a great gush of thankfulness to find that, with the exception of the fright, not one single hair of that golden head had been injured.

By this time the crowd had sufficiently recovered from the threatened realisation of sudden death, and, with regained wit, sufficient society veneer to murmur the usual polite condolences and congratulations to the now elated mother. Still the rescuer sat, his face buried in his hands, a whirling, maddening pain in his head, and a mist before his eyes as if the world had suddenly lost its sunshine. Vere, with tears in her eyes and a tremble in her voice, pushed her way through the too sympathetic crush and laid her hand gently on the sufferer's arm. 'I am afraid you are hurt,' she said. 'Can I do anything for you?'

Winchester, for he it was, looked up vaguely, the words coming to his ears like the roar of the sea singing in a dream, a dream which was not all from the land of visions. He wondered dreamily where he had heard that voice before.

With an effort he looked up again. For the first time in five years their eyes met in the full light of day.

She knew him now, recognised him in a moment. But it was scarcely the same Winchester who had restored her lost ornament a fortnight ago. The old shabby raiment had disappeared, giving place to a neat suit, such as no gentleman had been ashamed to wear. Fourteen days' steady work, inspired by a worthy object, had met an equal reward. It was no longer Winchester the outcast that Vere was addressing, but Winchester the gentleman, and in his heart he rejoiced that it was so.

For a moment they were no longer the centre of a glittering host of fashion; their thoughts together had gone back to the vanished past, as they looked into each other's eyes, neither daring to trust to words.

'Jack,' said Vere at length—'Jack, is it really you?'

'Yes, dear, it is I,' Winchester responded faintly. 'You did not expect to meet me like this if—you ever expected to meet me at all.'

'Do you think I forget, as—as some people do? You did not always judge me so harshly. How could we meet better; how could I feel more proud of you than I do at this moment?'

Gradually the crowd fell back. There was not much mischief done after all; nothing that a clothes-brush and a little warm water would not rectify. Besides, Miss Dene seemed to know the stranger, and from one or two expressions, would apparently prefer to be left alone.

Winchester's answering smile had no trace of its accustomed bitterness. After all, there was something in the soft music of Vere's tones, a charm in the reckless abandonment of self which fell upon his troubled heart like balm in Gilead. There was something sweet also in the consciousness that he had played the man so recently in her sight, under the very eyes whose brightness alone he had only valued. There was a stimulant worth all the tonics in the pharmacopoeia.

He would have spoken again, but he was suffering still from a great rush of pain and giddiness, as if the whole universe was slipping into space. Directly after, the feeling passed away, and he was himself once more. By this time Lady Hurlingham had driven away, while some one, more thoughtful than the rest, had remained to place his carriage at Winchester's disposal.

'This gentleman is a friend of yours, Miss Dene?' he asked. 'Allow me to suggest that your groom takes your horse, and that you drive likewise. You will pardon my sister's apparent heedlessness, but you see Violet is an only child, and'—

Vere looked gratefully into Lord Bearhaven's grave, handsome face, and extended her hand in an impulse of gratitude. The meeting she had so much dreaded was made smooth and pleasant by his kindly courtesy.

'I might have expected this from you,' she answered warmly. 'Believe me, I am deeply obliged. Mr Winchester is not only a friend, but a relation.'

Lord Bearhaven gave Jack a hand-grip which said more than the most carefully chosen words. But what an effort this magnanimity cost him,

only Vere, who saw that he had heard everything, alone could tell.

'I am forgiven, then?' asked Winchester as they drove along Oxford Street. 'Well, it is worth playing the poor part I have played to-day to hear that.—Vere, Vere, what a sorry self-opinated fool I have been! Do you know that for the last week I have been screwing up my courage to the sticking-point? But whenever I found myself near you, my pluck failed.'

'You do not deserve to be spoken to,' Vere replied, her cheeks aflame, her eyes laden with unshed tears, though the thrilling tenderness of her voice robbed the words of their sting. 'How dare you venture to treat me as if I should be ashamed of my old friends?'

Up to this point, Winchester had scarcely dared to analyse his sensations. Now that all the impenetrable barriers of restraint were broken down between them, he found himself talking in the old familiar strain, and wondering if the last five years were merely a phantasm of his own creation.

'And Chris,' Vere ventured at length, though the question had long been trembling on her tongue, 'do you ever hear anything of him?'

Winchester told her everything, disguising nothing except the part of good Samaritan he himself had played towards the unfortunate Ashton. It must have been an interesting conversation, for Vere's face as she listened grew very soft and tender, her eyes sweet and luminous. When at length the end of Arlington Street was reached, Winchester stopped the coachman, and insisted upon alighting, a step which Vere vehemently opposed.

'You are coming home with me,' she said. 'Have you any idea who you will find waiting there to welcome you?'

'Not the slightest; unless you have persuaded—but that is impossible. Still, you must have a chaperon of some sort. Is it possible that you have our dear old Aunt Lucy at Arlington Street?'

'Not only possible, but an actual fact. Come; you cannot refuse now.'

Winchester hesitated for a moment, then, with a sudden impulse, complied. Of all his relations, the 'Aunt Lucy' in question was the only one who kept a green spot in his recollection. A few moments later he passed a welcome guest through the very portals outside which so short a time before he stood a wretched outcast and useless member of society.

Two hours later, when he descended the steps again, with a bright eager look of exultation on his face, a servant loitering in the hall saw and wondered if it was the same man whom his mistress had brought home so recently. He lingered for a moment for a few parting words with Vere.

'So that is settled,' he said; 'and if you should feel afraid'—

'Afraid!' she echoed scornfully. 'I shall not be afraid.'

'I do not think you will. Now, remember you have promised. And above all things, Lord Bearhaven must know everything.'

'I promise,' she answered. 'If I could only see Chris'—

'But you can't do anything of the kind—for

the present, at least. You must have perfect faith in me.'

'I have,' Vere replied, looking into his glowing eyes. 'Had I not always?'

### PROTECTIVE COLOURING IN BIRDS.

THERE comes periodically to this country a bird of the starling kind, known as the Rose-coloured Pastor. It has the back, breast, and sides of an exquisite pale pink; and it is perhaps this bright plumage which prevents it from establishing a residence here. In its continental haunts it is observed to affect trees or shrubs bearing rose-coloured flowers, such as the blossoms of the pink azalea, among which the birds more easily escape notice. This is an instance of what is known as adaptive or protective coloration, which we need not go abroad to observe.

The struggle for existence among plants and animals is a hard one, and every point gained in the direction indicated tends to survival. The modification in the form and colour of insects, and the successful shifts thereby made to elude their enemies, provide the striking facts of the case. Birds modify and rearrange the colours of their plumage, adapt the coloration of their eggs, and the structure and material of their nests, all to the same end. We know that the more highly organised flowers have changed both form and colour to satisfy insect visitors; while the insects themselves have modified their organs so as to enable them the better to visit certain flowers. In Sumatra, Mr Wallace found a large butterfly, its upper surface of a rich purple, with a broad bar of deep orange crossing each wing. The species is found in dry woods and thickets, and when on the wing, is very conspicuous. Among bush and dry leaves the naturalist was never able to capture a specimen, for, however carefully he crept to the spot where the insect had settled, he could never discover it until it suddenly started on again. But upon one occasion he was fortunate enough to note the exact spot where the butterfly settled, and although it was lost sight of for some time, he at length discovered it close before his eyes. In its position of repose it exactly resembled a dead leaf attached to a twig.

So in our own country we may observe that the Purple Emperor Butterfly affects certain of the brightly-coloured wild geraniums, upon which, in repose, it is almost impossible to detect it. The Brown-spotted Fritillaries of our birch-woods also offer examples of this class, it being difficult to detect them against the fungus-pitted leaves of every shade of brown and dun and yellow.

Birds afford the most numerous examples. The pencilled plumage of the Snipe lying still in the brown marshes is almost impossible to detect, although the birds get up at one's feet everywhere. The same may be said of the Woodcock in the leaf-strewn woods, and of the nests and eggs of both species. The eggs of the wild duck assimilate to the colour of the pale-green reeds, and those of the Lapwing to the ploughed field or the upland. During the breeding-time of the common Green Plover, a person unaccustomed to bird-nesting was sent up a furrow in which were six nests, each containing

eggs which were to be collected. By the time the end of the furrow was reached the collector had put his foot into one nest and failed to find the other five. The colour of Red Grouse conforms very nearly to that of the brown and purple heather among which they lie, as do also their richly-speckled eggs. The Partridge has a double protection. It is most difficult to pick out her quiet brown plumage from the hedge-bottom so long as she remains still. She adopts the duns and browns of the dead leaves among which she lies. When she leaves her eggs deliberately, she is careful to cover them over; but this seems almost superfluous, for there is no great contrast between the tint of the eggs and that of the leaves among which they lie. A hen Pheasant sitting in a bracken bed is equally difficult to detect; and this applies particularly to the young of all the game-birds just mentioned. The bright dark eyes of birds and animals frequently betray their presence, those of the former being generally large and prominent. A short-eared Owl on a peat-moss we have mistaken for a clod of turf; and a gaunt Heron with wind-fluttered feathers, for drift stuff caught in the swaying branches of the stream. Another characteristic case of protective imitation and colouring is furnished by the Nightjar or Goatsucker. This large night-flying bird, half owl, half swallow, rests during the greater part of the day on the bits of bare limestone of the fells. Its mottled gray plumage exactly corresponds with the gray of the stones; and its eggs, in colour like its plumage, are laid upon the bare ground without the slightest vestige of a nest, and again entirely resemble the stone.

It will be remarked that all these birds live much upon the ground, obtaining the principal part of their food therefrom, and therefore have special need of protection. And then incubation in every case takes place on the ground; and just as the imitation of the plumage of the female bird is perfect, so will the fact tell upon the survival of the species. There is no such need for tree-builders, as these for the most part are out of the reach of predatory animals. The Chaffinch is by far the most abundant bird of our fields and woods; and there is one good reason why it should be so. It invariably covers its nest on the outside with dead lichens like those of the trunk against which its nest is built. Against predatory boys and birds and animals the device succeeds admirably, with the result that the chaffinch as a species flourishes vigorously. The common Wren constructs her nest of moss, and places it upon a mossy background, so as to present no sharp contrasts. Sometimes she interweaves one or two dead oak-leaves, so as to render the deception more deceitful; and, from the number of wrens which abound, she evidently succeeds. Starlings and sparrows and jackdaws, which build in holes at a considerable elevation, and have therefore less need of protection, hang out straws and sticks and bits of wool and feather as impudent advertisements. But Wheatears and such birds as build in low walls cannot afford to do this; they build neat nests, leaving no trace without. Several of our warblers drag dead leaves to the outside of their nests, and a hundred others employ like ingenuities.

Fish rapidly assimilate to the colour of the river-bed; and the same rule applies to animals. It is commonly known that mountain hares are brown in summer, white in winter; so are ermines, silver foxes, ptarmigan, snow buntings, the snowy owl, Iceland falcons, and a host of other creatures. All assimilate to the general colour of the ground on which they live; and the one which assimilates most closely is the most successful as a species.

### THE MAD SPANIARD.

By the AUTHOR of 'THE CROSS OF GLENCARRIG.'

WE all wondered what brought him into this wild district, so far from his own land, or what induced him to take up his abode in that old ruined tower. Such a place as it was to make a home in! Gray and old; storm-beaten; with deep crevices, into which you could put your hand, between its huge stones; and quaint nooks in the high eave-courses, in which the wandering swallows in summer-time built their nests—as one might see by the straws and moss that peeped thereout; it was about as unlikely a spot as any one not altogether demented would be expected to select for habitation. There was nothing standing but the bare walls, and how thick and strong they were! Local history and tradition had alike failed to tell its story; it had been roofless and ruined for longer than the fathers and grandfathers of the present generation could remember; and was likely to remain so until the lapsing ages should make its walls crumble on the precipice they surmounted, and cause them to topple over into the sea.—Not, indeed, that they could fall right into the sea, save when the winter winds sent the great rolling waves of the Atlantic inwards and swept them, leaping and surging, to the base of the cliffs. At such a time they would, no doubt, if they gave way, descend into the sea; but at other periods they would simply fall on a small strand, crescent-shaped, of the finest sand, as white as flour; or, otherwise, on the great beams and timbers protruding with uncouth prominence through it—the relics of a great vessel that some time in the past had been wrecked by the pitiless sea and driven in there.

It must have been a ship of no ordinary kind that was thus driven in and wrecked, for its gigantic beams were too unwieldy for any vessels that our island had ever seen. Moreover, they were fastened and clamped with iron and copper bolts and nuts to a degree, and in themselves were black and hard, so much so, indeed, that they had remained there for generations untouched by the inhabitants, who would rather do without firing than go to the trouble of cutting them up. When it came there; who manned it; when it sailed the seas; what nation's flag it bore aloft; were all things that the great ever-advancing wave of time had buried away and hidden out of sight. And for aught one could see of decay about them, they were likely to last as long as the old castle itself. But a change came over them and the surroundings quite unexpectedly; and this brings me back to the commencement of my story.

He was a small, withered, black-looking, little



man. I remember very well when I first saw him—standing at the door of the old castle, looking down on the strand and over the sea, and taking note generally of the place. He might be sixty years of age, or only forty, from what any one could judge by his appearance. And the gibberish he spoke!—it was enough to make all the neighbours laugh when they heard it. Much he cared about this laughing! He ordered in timber, got a local carpenter to help him, and soon had a portion of the old castle roofed in. Had two or three rooms made in it, too, quite comfortable—though it was the wonder of everybody what a single man, and a stranger to boot, wanted so many for. And then it became rumoured that he had taken a lease of the place from Lord Clare, as if he were going to live in it for ever. Knowing-people shook their heads, and said: 'Wait until winter; wait until the storms come from the west and the great Atlantic waves roll in, and see how long he will remain in it!'

'What was he going to do with it?—what was he going to do with himself?—how was he going to live?' were questions constantly asked. Not asked of *him*—people were too much afraid of him to do that—but of one another.

They were very soon answered. He began boat-building. If he had begun to build another Noah's Ark, people would not have been one whit more surprised. The only boats used along our portion of the Irish coast were corraghs, which were merely a slight framework of timber covered over with hides or skins. Nothing else would live in the stormy and tumbling seas that surrounded us. Who was going to buy *his* boats when made, or where were they to be used? And then people shook their heads and laughed more consumedly than before. But quite heedless of what any one said or thought, the new arrival kept straight and steadily at his work.

It was not the least curious thing about him that he should try to work up the huge beams of the sand-covered wreck into materials for his trade. It was quite of a piece with all his other oddities, and those who laughed at him before pitied him now, for they considered him thoroughly demented. The Mad Spaniard—I should have told you that he came from Spain; I don't know how we chanced to know it, but we did—the Spana-Oge, or Mad Spaniard, as he was called, soon came to be spoken of far and near; and people would wander to the place Sunday after Sunday, when they had time, to look at the progress the new trade was making and at the boat-builder himself.

But they had soon something else to talk about, when, one summer's evening, they found that another had joined him—a young girl. How she had come there, or when she had come, no one knew or could tell, but there she was, walking with him. If the boat-builder were old and withered and grizzled, the new-comer was fresh and soft and sweet as the May flowers growing in the valleys hard by. Slender and elegant, with a face singularly sweet and winsome—though its dark olive colour contrasted curiously with the fresh red and white of our island girls—and with a pair of dark eyes, out of which shot gleams of light brighter than the brightest sunshine, when she smiled. She was the very

perfection of gentle and blooming girlhood. Her step was so light it would scarcely bend the flower on the hill-side; and her slender form put to shame the most graceful of the island lassies; though, I can tell you, looking back at it now after the lapse of some fifty years, there were some among them who needed not to blush beside the best of those who trod the streets of the metropolis—and who knew it, too, moreover!

But the most attractive characteristic of the Donna Gracia—for so the old man termed her—was her voice. Unlike him, she spoke the English language; but it was with a foreign accent that seemed to give it a charm that it never before possessed; and in her tones you would wonder whether it was the soft murmuring of the stream in the summer-time you heard, or the silver note of a golden harp. At anyrate that was the way Phadrig Coady, the philomath, put it; and if he did not know how to describe it, who could?—for he was a man of deep learning, so deep, indeed, that very few could fathom it, and had read a wonderful deal of books.

Just about this time there came to Ennismore House—Lord Clare's place—his son, Captain Ormond. He was not the eldest son, only the second eldest, and had been away serving with the colours in the wars. He had been with Lord Gough in India; had crossed swords with the Punjab chivalry at the passage of the Sutlej; had seen the sun darken with the haze of battle on the plains of Sindhia; and had been one of the first to reach the ramparts on the great day of victory, when the flag of England was planted on the bloodstained redoubts of Chillianwalla. Had been seriously wounded, too, and was home now for a time invalided.

A gay, handsome, stalwart young fellow he was, notwithstanding that he was obliged, for the time being, to use a crutch to assist him in walking; and no one would think, looking at his bright, pleasant, laughing eyes, that he had ever drawn sword to smite a foeman, or that he had ridden over a battle-field with the dead and dying lying thick around him. But the ways of human destiny are wonderful, and so it was that in his rambles over the hills of Clare in search of health he came into the neighbourhood of Mona Castle. And coming into the neighbourhood of the old ruin, of course he heard of the stranger that had settled down there; and of course, too, out of an indolent curiosity, he visited the place.

It was only a few days after the sweet foreign young lady had come to it, and no doubt they must have been completely unknown to one another. But they might have known one another for years, so intimate they became in a short time. They were always together. If Donna Gracia went for a walk along the cliffs overlooking the Atlantic, it was not long until she was joined by Captain Ormond. If the sea were calm, and the sun turned it into a sheet of molten gold, until it spread away glistening to the horizon, be sure if a speck broke the level reach of glowing waters it was Captain Ormond's corragh, with the Spanish Rose beside him. Charlie Ormond—for so the tenantry were wont affectionately to call him—used to laugh

gaily if any one joked him on the subject, and say he was only teaching her to sail the corragh in return for her teaching him the Spanish language. But we all knew very well how it was, and that the soft winsome ways of the Spanish Rose had caught him, and that the sparkles of her black-blue eyes had fairly bewitched him. Bewitched him, indeed, is the only way to say it, for after a few months, and when the captain was restored to as good health as ever he was in, the order for his recall came. His regiment was ordered for foreign service again, and he was bound to go. But he did *not* go. If they had offered him the colonelcy of his regiment, nay, if they had made him general of division or commander-in-chief, he would have refused it, for the pleasure of listening to Donna Gracia's silver accents and basking in the light that streamed from her sunny eyes.

It was a time when England needed all her men, and when honour and duty were words first on all men's lips, and, for the matter of that, in all men's hearts too; and the first consequence of Charlie Ormond's delay or reluctance in going was that he was broke from his commission; and the second that he was, in a fit of wrath and humiliation, disinherited by his father. He was the second son, you remember, and the estates were strictly entailed.

All this time the old man—the Mad Spaniard as they called him—was working away steadily at his boat-building, pretending to mind nothing, but keeping a pretty sharp eye, you may depend, on his daughter, or niece, or grand-daughter, or whatever relation she might be to him. And it was really wonderful to see what a fair and trim and stately little boat he did finally construct, and how blithe and free she swam the waters even of the stormiest day.

But there soon came a new development in affairs; for, one evening in the late autumn, a strange schooner dropped her anchor in the offing. In the morning she was gone; and, lo and behold! with her, too, was gone the Spanish Rose, Donna Gracia—gone beyond all doubt and question, for she was seen there no more. Gone—what was worse—without Charlie Ormond's knowledge, as was clear enough from his distracted condition when he found it out.

His worst enemy—if he had one, which was very unlikely—would have pitied him in the sorrow and desolation of his heart. It was not that he cared, I do believe, for the loss of his commission or for his being disinherited by his father—it was for the gloom that had fallen on his heart and his life owing to her disappearance. The Mad Spaniard could, or would, give him no information of her whereabouts or whither she had gone, only that she had taken a sudden notion of joining her friends who were on board the schooner. Indeed, it would have been difficult to get much more information out of him, for he could not, or pretended he could not, speak our language; and Captain Ormond knew none of his save what he picked up from the Rose, and we doubt whether that was much.

Day after day and week after week Charlie Ormond moped about on the hills and along the shore, hoping against hope that she might come back as unexpectedly as she had gone away. But she

never came. By degrees the bright look of health and vigour died out of his face, the quick good-humoured gleam from his eye, the buoyancy and activity from his form. He was falling into bad health, and what was worse, into bad spirits; and the difference between his appearance now and what it was in the summer days when he shot his corragh over the shining waves with Gracia beside him was very painful to see. There was no home for him at Lord Clare's; his commission was gone, his love had fled—what was he to do?

When it became palpable enough that the beautiful Spanish girl was coming no more, he answered the unasked question himself: he disappeared without telling any one whither he was going. He had been seen about the rocks overlooking the little harbour one evening, and the next morning was nowhere to be found. Nor did he turn up again. Some said the poor young fellow had drowned himself in a fit of melancholy; others, that he had gone away and volunteered into the ranks of his former regiment. Most people believed the former; for, indeed, how could a high-spirited young fellow consent to serve as a private where he had worn the gold epaulets of an officer? Many an anxious search was made—not by Lord Clare or any of his people; he never made the slightest inquiries after him—disowned him, in fact—but by the dwellers of the island—along the shore for his body, in case the waves should cast it up; but they never did. If the sea held his body, it kept it close in its depths, and did not yield it up to the searchers.

By-and-by it began to be rumoured that his 'fetch' was appearing. People, belated at night along the rocks overhead the old castle, declared they had seen him or some one like him. Of course nobody believed them. Why should they? Such things are nonsense, you know; but all the same the islanders began to give a wide berth to the rocks when the shadows of night commenced to fall; all the more because strange lights began to be seen occasionally over the cliffs at untimely hours. There was no mistaking these latter. Not one or two, but ten and twenty, had seen them from a distance, far into the night—nay, at and past the midnight hour—rising and sinking, as if carried by some one walking over, and through, the ups and downs of the cliffs. As a consequence, naturally enough that portion of the shore was less and less frequented thereafter; for, fortunately, the usual harbour for the fishing-boats lay on the other side, and there was no essential need to go there.

It may be readily imagined that after the misfortunes which had come on the young officer, the Mad Spaniard did not grow in more favour with the inhabitants. But as no one molested him, and as he did not know, or if he did, did not care for what they thought, but worked on unceasingly, it came to pass that by degrees people withdrew their attention from him and concentrated it on their own proper business. He was always looked upon as uncanny, and it rather began to be thought that the troubles that had come on Captain Ormond might readily come in other ways on those who impertinently meddled with his affairs. Wherefore, people let him quietly alone; and a good deal of the interest attaching

to him and his affairs when he first came having died out, it was but rarely, if indeed at all, any one went to that portion of the island. But stray fishermen, sailing around in their corraghs, brought word that he was still at work; for they could hear him busily hammering with his axe at the sides of the old hulk, or see him scooping the sand from her interior and burrowing it out.

One evening, late in the month of October, when the Atlantic storms might be expected at any moment to begin on the coast, the tall masts of a foreign-rigged vessel appeared in the offing, and later on in the same evening, dropped anchor hard by the coast, and not far from the Mad Spaniard's harbour. It was a reckless thing to do, for if a storm came on, nothing in the world could save her; and very suddenly they did come on this wild coast. Of course we all wondered what brought her there; and many were the surmises concerning her. Had she come with a supply of winter provisions for the lone worker? Or, again, had she brought back Charlie Ormond's lost love, the fair Spanish Rose? This latter looked so very likely, that we all jumped at once to the conclusion that she had, that this was the mission that brought her here.

You may depend curious footsteps were straying early next day to the shore, for not a few thought and hoped that the missing youth might have, by some curious turn of the wheel of chances, come back with the Rose. Numerous lights had been seen about the place—on the cliffs, on the sands, on the sea—all night, as if some scenes of rejoicing were going on. But behold! when they arrived there, the vessel was gone; stranger still, the Mad Spaniard was gone. There was not a soul about the place; they had all departed with the morning dawn. The news soon spread, and quite a crowd gathered, who scattered themselves over the place, curiously searching and investigating. And then came a strange revelation! The old hulk, massive and magnificent even in her ruin, had been quite excavated, the sand completely cleared away down to the lowest timbers of her keel. Compartments hidden away for generations—centuries—had been laid bare and broken up; and scattered here and there over the naked timbers were—shining pieces of gold! Yes, shining pieces of gold—broad Spanish doubloons, which had fallen about, either unnoticed by the finders, or perhaps considered by them, in the hurry of their departure and in the larger treasure they had to deal with, as not worth the trouble of picking up.

Then we knew it all. The very name, *Sanctissima Trinidad*, in huge bronze letters on her uncovered side, half hidden by a greenish coating of verdigris, was enough to tell the tale. If we did not understand it at once, Phadrig Coady, dominie and philomath, was there to explain it—not a little, be it said, to our mortification.

The *Sanctissima Trinidad* was one of the treasure-ships of the famous Armada. When that great fleet had come a-sailing up the English Channel in mighty crescent, her tall masts stood high above the others. Don Vespasian Gonzaga, of the great house of Mantua, sometime Viceroy in Spain, commanded her. She formed a mark for the attacks of the great naval leaders, the bold sea-lords, whom this crisis in England's fortunes

called forth. Drake had levelled his guns under her huge sides, and poured shot and shell into her almost solid wooden walls; Howard of Effingham had mantled her in a haze of battle-smoke; Hawkins had riddled her acres of sails with chain-shot; and Sir Martin Frobisher had swept her bulwarks with grape until not a living Spanish face could peer above them. With the defeat and scattering of the Armada, the tattered and torn *galiasse* shook herself free from these dreadful watchdogs, mustered what sail she could, and, in despairing retreat, bore northwards around the shores of Scotland, and homewards by the western Irish coast. There, the fierce Atlantic storms had caught her; had rent her torn sails afresh; had made her a helpless wreck on the wild waters; and had finally flung her on the quicksands of Arran island, not a soul of her crew or officers remaining to tell her tale. The wild waves completed their work by sweeping the drifting sand around and over her, until nothing but the shattered timbers of her prow remained visible. There the winter winds of two centuries and a half had moaned over her; the suns of twelve score summers had brightened the sands above her; but no one knew or dreamt of the huge treasure that lay concealed beneath.

Until the Mad Spaniard came! The wonder was how he learned it. Some Spanish archives, perhaps, preserved remembrance of the vessels in which the gold was carried, and some chance incident had brought to light where her ruined timbers lay.

Now we understood what the old foreigner's boat-building meant! now we knew how little of the fool or the madman there was about him! He had laboured zealously, untiringly, in his quest; had taken cunning steps enough to keep our superstitious islanders' eyes from his work; and had found at last his reward. The strangely-rigged barque was bearing, even now, off to Spanish soil solid gold and treasure.

How we wondered, to be sure, and how many of us writhed under our sense of wrong and disappointment! For was it not *our* gold he had carried off?—it was long enough in our island to be our property. Oh, if we only had known it was there! Maledictions loud and deep followed in the wake of that treacherous Spanish barque, with that cunning Spanish rogue on board. However, there was nothing for it but to put up with the loss, and pick up what gold had been scattered and dropped by the thieves, and look vainly for more.

We daresay there was no one more disappointed and annoyed when he heard of it than was Lord Clare. It was not enough that the villainous Spaniard and his daughter had bewitched his son and destroyed his prospects in life, but they should despoil his estate of the treasure therein! And indeed it did seem as if, in carrying off the gold, the Mad Spaniard had carried off a good deal of the old lord's luck too, or, rather, had left behind for him a special series of misfortunes. For one day Gerald, his eldest son, out shooting on the hills, by accident, passing a fence, lodged the contents of his gun in his own breast, and was carried home—dead! More than that, heavy reverses came to the Earl in some mining speculations he had long been engaged in; the mort-

gages on his property foreclosed their mortgage; and the broad acres of his ancestors and every stick and stone in Ennismore were advertised for sale.

Of course we islanders were all deeply concerned in this. It was of deep moment to us who should be our next landlord. We were sorry for the old lord, for he had been a good and kindly ruler of his tenantry. The story of the Mad Spaniard and his treasure quickly left men's minds in presence of this new event, which we beheld in the light of a grave calamity. We could only look on and sorrow for him; we were as powerless to help him as we were to stay the storm that swept the coast.

The day came when the sale was to be effected, the mortgage foreclosed, and the estates of Arranmore to pass from the hands of its ancient possessors. Of course the tenantry all assembled to witness a proceeding that was of such deep moment to them; and of course, among the others, went we, the islanders. There was a large concourse assembled. There are few things more melancholy than the breaking up of an ancient home; it means the sunderance of so many ties, the ruin of so many hopes, the coming of so many changes. Wherefore an air of gloom pervaded the place as we wandered aimlessly about waiting for the sale to commence. Carriages bearing many of the surrounding gentry drove up; containing, also, many London gentlemen interested in the matter, either as intending purchasers, as relatives, or as mortgagees. We were watching the various vehicles as they came, discharged their freights, and went away, without indeed any motive more potential than vague and idle curiosity, when suddenly a neighbour touched me on the arm and said, in a voice which at once caught my attention, so full of strange surprise it was: 'Look!—look!'

I looked in the direction his outstretched hand indicated, and there, in the act of descending from an elegant carriage, the same curious grin I remembered so well on his tawny wrinkled face, was—yes, by the immortal ghost of King Bryan!—was Spana-Oge, the Mad Spaniard himself!

I rubbed my eyes quick and hard, for I thought I was bewitched or dreaming. I rubbed them harder still, when the next moment there stepped down—like a sunbeam, a summer flower, entrancing, radiant—Donna Gracia, the Spanish Rose! smiling, delighted; with a halo of loveliness around her which far outshone even her beauty on the summer sands of Arran! I think I rubbed my eyes hardest of all when there came from the carriage, third and last, Charlie Ormond—the future Lord Clare!—looking just as good-humoured and brave as when he carried the colours of England on the redoubts of the stormed Indian stronghold!

Is it necessary to tell how the sale was stopped; how the old baronial castle remained undesploiled; how the mortgage was paid off; how such a wedding never yet was seen in Norman tower as that which celebrated the union of the Hon. Captain Charles Ormond and Donna Gracia, heiress to I don't know how many Spanish quarterings—for she was lineal descendant to the powerful grandee whose bones whitened on the unpitied Arran coast; how, when the old lord was gathered to his fathers, the succeeding lord and Lady Clare

made themselves so popular and beloved that I don't think a single soul envied the possessors of the treasures torn from the depths of the *Sanctissima Trinidad*? I trow not.

#### A WEIRD SCENE.

DIMLY and slowly breaks the dawn,  
The dawn of a cold and drear March day;  
In the city there hangs a gloomy pall  
Over reeking roof and blackened wall;  
Over noisome slum and stately hall;  
Over filthy alley and velvet lawn,  
In the grimy city, far away.

Here, on this wild and rocky coast,  
A wind roars over the darkling sea;  
It raves round the splintered spires of stone,  
Then dies away in a hollow moan  
In the slimy caverns wide and lone,  
Like the plaint of a pale and flitting ghost  
At its curse of Immortality.

From the drifting cloud-wrack overhead  
Come slants of pitiless hissing rain;  
Each headland frowns through the rainy gloom  
Like a couchant Sphinx with a face of doom,  
Solemn and calm through the fret and fume  
Of the hissing waves in their ocean bed,  
And the winds that buffet and rage in vain!

Something moves on that lonely shore,  
A shapeless shadow against the gray;  
Is it a creature of the sea?  
A boneless horror, whose lair may be  
In the caverns that yawn so gloomily?  
Some loathsome monster that hates the day,  
And hides from the sun for evermore?

The day advances; a wan cold light  
Gleams from the torn gray sky o'erhead;  
Drearly strikes on the cliff's bare steep,  
Disimally glances on rocks that weep  
With the raindrops that down their furrows creep,  
Or hang on their trailing growth unshed:  
The day is more drear than the bygone night.

'Tis a strange wild figure that grows defined,  
In the chilly light of the dismal morn;  
A maid stood there, of dishevelled mien  
And lovely presence, or once had been.  
But now; ah, picture the desolate scene  
And the wind-tost maid and her state forlorn,  
A broken life, and a wandering mind!

Her lover was drowned on that rock-bound coast;  
Keel upwards, his boat came back from sea;  
She watches and waits for his spectral form,  
Her figure drenched, but her love still warm;  
Her dark hair rent by the raging storm.  
Love triumphant as Love can be:  
Her heart like the elements, torn and tost.

E. R.

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